

modern Distillery Age



SEPTEMBER 8, 2017 | MODERN DISTILLERY AGE

VOLUME 8 | NUMBER 32

Flag Hill Distillery & Coppal House Farm – Community Farming: Growing Grain for Whiskey in Lee, N.H.

Three years ago, farmer John Hutton of Coppal House Farm and Brian Ferguson, distiller at Flag Hill Distillery, got together to figure out what needed to happen to bring whiskey grain farming to Lee, N.H. The ambition was born out of Flag Hill's quickly growing distillery that needed a lot of agricultural input and a lack of interest from New Hampshire farms to produce it. Coppal House Farm had already been growing some grains, and it didn't take much convincing for the two to begin collaborating.



L-R: John Hutton of Coppal House Farm & Brian Ferguson of Flag Hill Distillery

"We couldn't get grain in New Hampshire that can be used to make whiskey," said Ferguson. "It was either a few hours north into Maine or upstate New York, and it's uneconomical to truck it that far. Not to mention we had little control over the type or quality of the supply. One key to making any good whiskey is to have the highest quality input. It's no different from cooking; quality input equals quality output. Having control over the process all the way to the source allows us to make sure the grain coming through the door is exactly what we are looking for to make world class spirits."

Hutton and Ferguson planted whiskey corn for the first time on Flag Hill's property in the spring of 2016.

"There is a learning curve," said Hutton, "but the system works. I stick to growing quality grains, and he sticks to making quality whiskey."

Even with a dry summer in 2016, Hutton's and Ferguson's formula worked. They harvested enough corn for Flag Hill Distillery to produce some bourbon and all of its neutral grain spirit used for making Flag Hill's cranberry, blueberry and sugar maple liqueurs.

continued on page 2

American Spirits Export Value Rises by 10.6% in First Half of 2017

The value of U.S. distilled spirits exports rose a robust 10.6% — up more than \$67 million — to a total of \$698.5 million in the first half of 2017 as compared with the same period in 2016, according to the Distilled Spirits Council.

In dollar terms, the growth was led by the largest category, American whiskeys, including bourbon, Tennessee whiskey and American rye, which rose nearly \$27 million to \$464.6 million, up 6.1%. Smaller categories of other American spirits showed strong increases such as brandy, up 39.4% or \$12.2 million, to \$43.45 million total; vodka, up 51.2% or \$11.4 million, to \$33.6 million total; and rum, up 49.5% or \$5.2 million, to \$18.55 million total.

"This clearly demonstrates the growing appeal of U.S.-made spirits, particularly American whiskeys, in many foreign markets," said Council Senior Vice President for International Trade Christine LoCascio. "But other traditionally smaller categories such as brandy, vodka and rum are now showing strength in many highly competitive markets."

Strong Growth Markets Include the U.K., Japan, Germany & France

LoCascio pointed out among the largest gains were in the U.K., up 39% or \$18 million to \$64.8 million; *continued on page 2*

Technavio's Global Craft Spirits Market Report

Technavio in London has announced the top five leading vendors in its recent Global Craft Spirits Market report, which also lists eight other prominent vendors that are expected to impact the market during the forecast period.

Technavio's market research analysts predict that this market will grow at a CAGR of nearly 27% until 2021. The demand for craft spirits is expected to increase during the forecast period due to the perception among consumers that craft spirits are better in terms of quality and taste than mainstream spirits brands. Also, the entry of new players and launch of new products by players will aid the market growth during the forecast period. Large players are acquiring small players to increase their presence in the market.

continued on page 2

To read the entire issue and subscribe to Modern Distillery Age, click here: [Subscribe](#)